

Amendment to the Specification

Kindly amend the specification as follows:

1. By inserting at page 1, after the title, the heading:

-- FIELD OF THE INVENTION --

2. By inserting at page 1, line 4, the heading:

-- BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION --

3. By inserting at page 2, line 11, the heading:

-- SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION --

4. By inserting at page 10, line 19, the heading:

--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS --

5. By inserting at page 11, line 9, the heading:

-- DETAILED DESCRIPTION --

6. By substituting the following paragraph for the one appearing at page 17,
lines 4-25:

-- The conduit 41a is one of six provided by a deadspace protection component 45 shown in detail in Figure 5. The air deflector 28 is shown in figure 5 merely to illustrate the spatial relationship between the air deflector 28 and the deadspace protection component 45. The air deflector 28 is not part of the deadspace protection component 45. The six conduits are provided by a series of 6 guide walls. For clarity and ease of reference only one conduit 41a and two guide walls 42a, 42b are labelled. Exhaled air and the purging curtain of air pass to the inlet 46a of the conduit 41a. The walls 42a, 42b radiate from the central cavity of the valve assembly ~~to the~~ to the valve outlet 40a in a spiral

manner. The spiralling nature of the conduit 41a increases the gaseous path length between the ambient atmosphere and the unidirectional valve mechanism 24, thus reducing the likelihood of unwanted increases of ambient gas. The cross section of the conduit 41a decreases the closer the conduit is to the ambient atmosphere. This accelerates exhaled air and purging air outwards, thus reducing the likelihood of unwanted ambient gas ingress. The exhaled and purging air exits each conduit via a small outlet 40a. The conduit 41a is shaped so as to turn any exhaled and purging air, and more importantly any incoming air, out of the plane of the spiral. This effectively turns the air through mutually perpendicular directions. This slows down any incoming air. The guide walls 42a, 42b are each provided with a radial projection 43a, 43b that slows any incoming air and helps to prevent a cyclonic motion of air from building-up within the valve assembly, should air be driven into the valve outlets. The use of multiple small valve outlets as opposed to one large vent decreases the risk of wind-blown ingress of ambient gas. --